



Nordic News

240 Sparks Street, PO Box 55023, Ottawa, ON K1P 1A1

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We hope that everybody is well rested after their Christmas festivities and ready to enjoy a new year of Nordic Society speakers, events, and lunches! We were delighted with our very successful Christmas lunch at the Officers' Mess, which was attended by 48 happily chatting members!

Our regular monthly lunches start up again on Monday, January 4 (see Monthly Lunches schedule below for more details.)

Our speaker series resumes on Wednesday, January 20 (see Speaker Series details below) with member Eric Bawden's presentation on his truly fascinating discovery of his Finnish roots.

We hope to see you in large numbers for these and our other events as our new year unfolds!

SPEAKER SERIES

(all take place at Officers' Mess, 149 Somerset Street West)

Eric Bawden on Wednesday, January 20, at 7:30 PM . will share the story of his very personal and poignant search for his Nordic ancestral roots, called "**A Soul's Journey to Find Its Way Home**".

Adopted into an English Canadian family as a 3-month old infant, Eric learned little factual information about his birth situation. Through an amazing and determined process, he was able to transcend barriers and establish connections with people and places that have brought him to where he is today.

Join us as Eric recounts his story about finding his Finnish roots, walking on the land farmed by his ancestors, and ultimately understanding his fundamentally Finnish character and spirit.

Clifford Savage to speak on his research on **Raoul Wallenberg** on Wednesday, February 17, at 7:30 PM.

Mr. Sturla Sigurjónsson, Ambassador of Iceland to Canada to speak on Wednesday, April 20

MONTHLY LUNCHESES

Canadian Nordic Society members meet for lunch once a month from September until June at the historic and beautiful Officers' Mess at 149 Somerset Street West (just east of Elgin Street), Ottawa. Lunch tickets are purchased at the bar, on the left as you come in to the building. Please do join us!

These are the dates of the lunches for the rest of this season:

- January 4
- February 1
- March 7
- April 4
- May 2
- June 6

Events of Interest to CNS Members

The Norwegian Community in Montreal's Scandinavian Dinner Dance on Saturday, January 30, at The Atwater Club. Scandinavians and friends from the Norwegian, Danish, Finnish, Swedish and Icelandic communities will enjoy a smorgasbord of fabulous Nordic food (prepared by the Atwater Club and by members of the various Scandinavian clubs), along with wine, live entertainment, door prizes and DJ dancing. To register, email ellen@norwegianclub.ca or call 514-483-2980.

Collections of Europe's Galleries, Museums, Libraries and More Available Online

Europeana.eu lets you explore the digital resources of Europe's galleries, museums, libraries, archives and audiovisual collections. On this blog, you can discover treasures from Europeana's open content archives, as well as information about special events and ongoing projects. It is well worth a look!

Finally I'm a True Norwegian!

by Hilde Huus

Although I was born in Norway to Norwegian parents, I knew I could never consider myself a true Norwegian until I had eaten lutefisk. On November 21 this year, I finally had my "baptism by fire" so to speak when I attended Per Talgoy's Annual Lutefisk Dinner at the New Edinburgh Fieldhouse. Lutefisk is dried cod which has been soaked in lye and cold water before baking. When cooked properly (and Per clearly knows how to cook it properly!) and served swimming in butter, with a boiled potato, peas, and plenty of white sauce, I discovered that it really is very good!

Per had put up a map of the Nordic countries and asked us all to stick in a pin where we or our families originated. Beside all the pins stuck in the major Nordic cities, I noticed one pin stuck right beside Tingvoll, which is in the part of Nordmøre in central Norway that my paternal grandmother came from. It happens that I have done quite a bit of research on that area because my great great grandfather was its first MP. I even visited it for a wonderful family reunion in 2014 where I met many, many second cousins. I looked around the room and tried to figure out who it was who came from the same sparsely inhabited area as some of my ancestors. Well it turned out it was Per Olav Talgoy himself! He was a charming host that evening, and I now consider him a distant cousin!

Like many Norwegians, my family has been very curious about its past ancestry, and quite a bit of research had already been done when I started to read up on it a couple of years ago. On my father's side, I learned that my great great grandfather the MP (who went by the almost stereotypical Norwegian name of Ole Nilssen) had "pulled himself up by his bootstraps". From very humble beginnings as the orphaned son of a poor coastal fishing and farming couple, he ended up as Secretary of Parliament. Couples like his parents survived by combining fishing with farmers on the coast of Norway for many hundreds of years, and I suspect some of my ancestors are among the early ones. But Ole Nilssen was also descended from one of the first "sogneprests" (Lutheran clergymen) in the area after the Reformation. This sogneprest was most likely either German or Danish, and he was a wealthy lumber trader in his day.

I learned that Ole Nilssen's wife was the daughter of a woman who had been born out of wedlock to a hired girl. His wife's father had much more "respectable" origins. One branch of his family tree stemmed from an ancient clan called "Aspa" that is thought to go back to Viking times, and another can be traced back to the German mining engineer, Lorentz Lossius, who is credited with discovering and developing the copper deposits that led to the mines at Røros, now a UNESCO world heritage site.

My mother's side of the family doesn't seem to have done much genealogical research, so I may take that on myself at some point. It seems likely that part of her family tree traces back to ancestors who have been living in southeast Norway for a long, long time. But her two grandfathers were both Swedes who came to Norway to find work and ended up marrying Norwegian girls. And we strongly suspect that my mother has some "Forest Finn" in her background too! This rather mysterious people originated in eastern Russia and very gradually migrated east into Finland, then Sweden, and finally Norway, burning down bits of forest to plant rye in the warm ashes, and then moving on as they used up the trees.

I think my ancestry is probably pretty typical for a Norwegian of my generation. Very likely my DNA would show a bit of Sami background too, as researchers have found that it is surprisingly common in the Norwegian population. All to say that I believe one's nationality is more a state of mind than anything else, and eating my first lutefisk and enjoying it definitely contributed to my Norwegian state of mind!

I am looking forward to hearing Eric Bawden's talk on January 20 about his Finnish roots. I would be delighted to hear about the backgrounds of other members of the Canadian Nordic Society,

whether Nordic or not, even if it's just a few lines. It would be fun to collect and include your stories in a future edition of the Nordic News!

Contributions to Nordic News

We appreciate receiving your articles and news to include in the *Nordic News*! Please email them to the editor, Hilde Huus, at hildehuu@gmail.com

www.canadiannordicsociety.com
email: info@canadiannordicsociety.com

<https://www.facebook.com/canadiannordicsociety>





Canadian Nordic Society

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Membership Application/Renewal

(membership year 1 September - 31 August)

Name(s) _____
Mailing address _____

Phone(s) _____
Email _____

Category of membership (check box)

- individual \$30.00
- family \$45.00
- student \$20.00

You will receive a receipt for your payment.

September 2015